Sometimes the brother-in-law was unmarried, but this did not help matters, such marriages being prohibited by the Church. To stop the practice it was usual to excommunicate not only the couple but the whole "house" which permitted it, until the "levirate wife" was dismissed. I visited, at Apripa Gurit, a house of eighteen people thus under the ban. The son, a fine young fellow, had taken his elder brother's young widow to wife one month after her husband's death: this by tribe rule is the correct time. She had been married a very short time to her first husband and had not yet borne a child. The whole household was very uneasy about the excommunication, and offered the priest in my presence first thirty and then fifty guldens and pictures and candles for the church. But they stubbornly refused to put a stop to the "levirate marriage"; it would not be honourable. The young man himself was very certain of this. It was a duty he owed to his brother, and, no matter what the consequences, he would do it. He said they had found a girl, and arranged that he should marry her in a year's time. Till then he must cohabit with his sister-in-law. This he assured me very earnestly.

At Thethi Shala I found a case of a man who had thus taken his uncle's widow and his brother's widow. He then proposed taking a legitimate wife as well and had paid most of the purchase money. Only then did the bride's parents learn of the two other "wives." They said he should not have their daughter till the other two were dismissed. He replied she was paid for, and was his property and threatened vengeance.

The parents appealed to the padre, who sheltered them and the girl at the church-house, and succeeded in arranging a marriage for her with a man at a safe distance. The parents returned the first purchase money. "The aunt and sister-in-law" arrangement continued. The padre at Thethi had routed out all polygamous arrangements in his parish but two.

He said that the people had a deep-rooted belief that it was right thus to take as wife the widow of uncle, cousin, or brother if she continued to live in the communal house. If this was not permitted she must be sent home to her people. They could see no alternative, and pleaded: "It is our old custom. Do not interfere with it."

In the wild and distant tribes of Nikaj, Toplana, and Berisha the custom was extremely common among the Christians. Thus at Nikaj, out of three hundred houses about fifty had sister-in-law concubinage, and other houses similarly kept aunts, so a large proportion of the children were illegitimate in the eyes of the Church, but not of the people. The legitimate wives were very apt to bolt with another man, and there was much blood-feud. In Berisha I was told that the sister-in-

597 law was taken to wife more often than not. To remonstrances the reply was, "She belongs to us," and it was pointed out it was the only way to get a wife without paying for her.

[597] In these districts, if the widow is sold, the bride-price is shared by her husband's family and her father's.

595 A man at Nikaj came to see me who was excommunicate for having
577 two wives—a legitimate wife and the widow of his cousin. He told me
688 he could not possibly put her away because it would be a disgrace to do so. She must stay in the house because she had young children to bring up, and so long as she is in the house he must cohabit with her, for she cannot have another husband. He was unhappy about the excommunication—but one must do one's duty and take the risk.

587 It is perhaps noteworthy that in the districts where this custom
144 is firmly rooted there are no Slavonic place-names and no appearance
103 of any Slavonic blood. The people are all in stature shorter and smaller built than the Maltsia e Madhe people. They are almost all dark-eyed—dark-brown to hazel—and dark-haired. The skull is short, but is round at the back and has not the characteristic flat back of the folk farther north. The hair grows very low on the forehead, especially on the temples, where sometimes it almost unites by a thin line of hair with the outer end of the eyebrow. The eyebrows often nearly meet in the middle. The nose is short and straight. The moustache is sparse and straggly. The beard, such as is seen after a fortnight without shaving, often sparse or patchy.

587 The custom of the levirate may therefore belong to the small,
179 dark, pre-Slavonic people.

The purpose of the levirate in other lands is often said to be to raise up children who are to rank as those of the deceased. Though this may have been the reason in the above-mentioned case of the man who took the very recently married widow of his brother, in the great majority of cases in Albania it is not so; for the widow with sons is the one who has the right to remain, and in fact must remain, in the family house; and therefore it is she who is most frequently the levirate wife. In this matter Albanian custom seems to differ from that in other lands where the levirate is practised.

4. Rights of Husband over Wife

562 No one may beat a woman but her father or her husband. In the mountains a husband had the right to beat his wife if he told her three
593 times to do, or not to do, a thing, and she disobeyed each time. If he
681 orders her not to reply and she does so he may beat her. Even some

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

This want of restrictions may be attributed, partly to the smaller emphasis which south Albanians lay on descent in the male line, partly to the greater store which, probably under Greek influence, they set on relationships in general. North Albanians, when sent to work in south Albania, always expressed lively astonishment when they found, for instance, a southerner claiming as a relative a man who was only the brother of his wife's brother.

It occasionally happens that a young widow with a son remarried in another family, who probably lived in another village or even district, and had a son by her second husband. Almost without exception the son by her first husband remained with his father's family, so that the two boys grew up apart. Even if the first son accompanied his mother on her remarriage, he had at an early age to return to his father's family. There never was any doubt that the two boys belonged to different households. They recognized each other as brothers, however, and if one was killed, the other had as much right as a full brother on the father's side to avenge him. But if either wished to avenge another male in the other's household, he could only do so by joining an expedition led by the master of that household; he could not do so independently, for except to his half-brother he was an outsider.

'Women do not have rifles' ran the Kanùn. As a corollary 'Women do not have blood feuds', it continued. One result of these Kanùns was that women could not properly avenge their murdered relatives. It was also recognized that they were generally too timorous to do so. A few 'strong characters', however, had been known to lay aside their feminine fears and to kill an enemy. Thus the virgin Emin of Orenjë in Çermenikë avenged her father. When he was killed she was still in the cradle and as she grew up she became aware that her four cousins, the only males left in the family, did not show too much zeal in avenging him. When she was fifteen, she secretly bought a rifle and, seeing the enemy one day come within range of the windows of her home, she fired at him and killed him with the third shot. Then her cousins were trebly annoyed. She, a woman, had proved herself their superior in courage; for her crime one of their lives was forfeit; and they had hoped to compound the feud without further bloodshed, a hope she had destroyed. In fact, she had embittered the feud by putting the enemy to the shame of losing a relative at a woman's hands. Again, a woman from Tërbaç, near Elbasan, hearing that her son

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Montenegrins EF5

as one hears daily." Some writers have ascribed this to "Turkish influence." But as the custom of the Levirate was common all through the neighbouring Albanian tribes and many of the Montenegrin tribes are of Albanian stock, it is highly probable that at least some of these extra wives were levirate. The custom of the djeveri sleeping with the bride before she is given to the bridegroom suggests that they stand in a peculiar relationship to her. In Albania the widow can be taken by the eldest male relative of her deceased husband—barring his father. In Montenegro the djeveri as a rule were the bridegroom's next brother and his uncle. In the old ballads we very frequently find the wife appealing to her djever brother-in-law as one whose special duty it is to help and protect her.

Among the oldest ballads in the Karadjitch Collection are two versions of the same theme—the punishment inflicted upon a criminal land by the Virgin Mary and the Saints. In the first version the land is India; in the second it is Syrmia. In both the crimes are similar: "An accursed land where God's religion is not; where they do not pray God's help; where children obey not their parents; where the younger obey not the elders; where kum (sponsor) does not keep faith with kum; *where the djever works shame to his sister-in-law;* where brother drives brother before the judges and inflicts penalties on him before the Turks; where they do not celebrate the saints, nor burn candles in the churches, nor read God's liturgy." The saints burnt up the land first, and then St. Sava buried it in snow, and finally the population returned to the paths of virtue and were pardoned. This curious tale sounds like a reminiscence of the struggle of the Church against pagan practices. The reference to the sin of the djever is noteworthy.

6. Divorce

In Montenegro, when I was there, divorce was according to the rules of the Orthodox Church, and more easily obtained by men than by women.

But within living memory a local form of divorce had existed. Against this Prince Danilo legislated in 1855 in Law 67: "Divorces between man and wife, so frequent in our land, are forbidden, except in the cases permitted by our Holy Church owing to the faults or impediments of husband or wife."

When neither party to the marriage had any choice in it, it is not surprising that ill-matched couples should have wished to part so soon as possible. Local usage forced them to marry; but local usage permitted divorce. Vladika Petar I is said to have favoured and per-

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TABLE 1: NUMBERS OF WIVES MARRIED BY FATHERS OF SUBJECTS, AND NUMBERS OF OFFSPRING.

	MrM	Dux	MrJ	Has	Lum	Puk	Mir	Zad	Mat	Dib	Int	Total
One Wife, Moslems	40		54	72	76	50		9	69	74	3	450
Catholics	47	89	10	10		24	82	83	9		2	356
Total	87	89	64	82	76	74	82	92	78	74	5	803
Two Wives, Moslems	12		27	19	23	13		3	20	32	1	150
Catholics	5	16	5	3		12	16	7	1		3	68
Orthodox											1	1
Total	17	16	32	22	23	25	16	10	21	33	4	219
Three Wives, Moslems			4	7	8	1		1	4			25
Catholics			2				1	1				4
Total			6	7	8	1	1	2	4			29
Four Wives, Moslems			1		2	1						4
Catholics		1					2					3
Total		1	1		2	1	2					7
Six Wives, Moslems			1						1			2
Total Fathers	104	106	104	111	109	101	101	104	104	107	9	1060
No. childless 1st wives		6	8	4	2	3	1	1	4	6		35
With daughters only	1	7	2			4	3	3	4	2	2	28
Total unsatisfactory 1st wives in plural marriages	1	13	10	4	2	7	4	4	8	8	2	63
No. boys born	400	317	332	366	394	325	300	298	271	365	31	3399
No. girls born	283	237	201	239	227	188	165	159	167	184	17	2067
Total children	683	554	533	605	621	513	465	457	438	549	48	5466
No. children per family	6.6	5.2	5.1	5.8	5.7	5.1	4.5	4.4	4.2	5.1	5.3	5.2
Sex ratio of children	141	134	165	154	174	173	182	187	162	198	182	163

587 for her and she has joined their group. If there is a surviving brother who is single, obviously the expedient thing to do is to give her to him. She might even be given to a first cousin. However, the occasion sometimes arises in Ghegnia where the classical form of the levirate is indicated, and a brother, preferably an older brother, of the deceased, a man who is already married, takes the widow into his household. In Moslem communities this causes no ecclesiastical difficulty. In Catholic households it may bring about a conflict with the priest. In such a case the Law of Lek wins over the Law of Rome. Societal needs are stronger than religious taboos. The new husband may not be allowed a church marriage, and it is possible that he may not consummate the new union, but the woman enters his household, and he cares for her and her children.

595 The second mechanism is polygyny, in case the first wife fails to produce male offspring. This again is perfectly legal among Moslems and diametrically counter to Catholic rules. The priest will not allow the husband to divorce his wife who fails to give him sons. If she gives him daughters there is always hope that a son will follow, and the crisis may be delayed. But if after a suitable time there are no offspring whatever, he will need a new wife. He cannot divorce his old one, and he cannot legally marry his new one. Here again custom sometimes wins. I personally have visited only one household of Catholic Ghegs in which I knew that the master had 2 wives, and it was for this reason. It is little wonder, since Catholicism fits so imperfectly the economic needs of the Albanian family, that many of them went over to the much more satisfactory (in this respect) faith of Islam.

125 In making up the form of our measurement blanks before the expedition, Dr. Hooton and I allotted spaces for the notation of the following vital statistics: number of wives married by subject's father, and number of children of each sex born to each wife. We chose the subject's father rather than the man himself because we would thus be dealing with complete or nearly complete families. In every case we received specific answers; very few men, whose fathers had had 3 or 4 wives, could

125 not remember how many children the oldest wife had had.

128 •595 These statistics do not constitute a record of pregnancies. Children who died in infancy are probably not included. Female infanticide has not been reported in Ghegnia. Presumably all or most of the children grew to such an age that either they were still living in 1929–30, or were old enough at the time of death to have made an impression on their full or half brothers who were our subjects. Our figures tell how many wives each father had, but not how many at a time. It would be hard to get that information from a casual questioning done in public at the time of measuring. In 1929 polygyny was legally forbidden in Albania for Catholics and Moslems alike, and the Catholics had in addition the position of the church to keep them from revealing the polygyny of their parents in the presence of several dozen other people. One other obvious defect of our data is that we have no record of marriages in which no son was born, and no second wife taken. This circumstance, although rare, must have occurred. The reader may think, in view of the unusual sex ratio, 163 male to 100 female offspring, that Moslems failed to reveal the true number of girls born, but I do not believe that this was the case. The Catholics had the same sex ratio as the Moslems. Furthermore, if many more children had been born than were recorded, the reproductive systems of Gheg mothers would have been taxed beyond their capacities.

As table 1 reveals, 1060 Ghegs married 1375 women. Three-fourths of the men had but one wife each, the rest anywhere from 2 to 6. A third of all Moslems married more than once, compared to a sixth of Catholics. [511] The greater plurality on the part of the Moslems reflects the greater fertility of the soil in the eastern tribes, which are almost wholly Moslem, and where a man can afford more wives and feed more children. The wholly Catholic tribes, Mirdita and Dukagin, are the poorest in Ghegnia. Where the Catholics and Moslems live together in about equal numbers, the Catholics marry as many wives as the Moslems. In fact, in Puka the Catholics had more. Religion therefore has little to do with the total number of wives a man marries, although it

[see p. 236 -- Analysis]

595 may have something to do with the number to
163 whom he is married at one time.
128 Our statistics give us a little help in finding out why 256 Ghegs married more than one wife. In 82 cases, or 32 per cent, the first wife failed to provide her husband with an heir, although in 28 of these cases, or 11 per cent, she did produce one or more daughters. Since we do not know the date of birth of each child, we cannot be sure that some of the first wives who bore sons did not do so after a second wife had been taken, and the ratio of plural marriages concluded for this reason may be higher than our figures indicate. Some of our records reveal marriage after marriage without issue, until finally, the fourth or even the sixth wife bears a son. One can almost hear the gunfire and rejoicing.

Our intertribal mixtures, in 5 cases out of 9, were men whose fathers had taken more than one wife each. Of the 4 Has men whose mothers had come from Podrima, 3 had been reared in polygynous families. These figures strongly indicate a political motivation. The custom of taking plural wives from alien tribes in order to strengthen alliances is a widespread one, and goes back to the days of Solomon. Our figures are not suited to reveal the exact instance of this kind of exogamy.

These 2 reasons probably account for nearly a half of all plural marriages. The other half can easily have been caused by accommodations to untimely deaths. Upon the death of a man, the levirate might give one of his kinsmen a second wife. Upon the death of a woman, her husband would remarry, were he able. What with difficult deliveries, puerperal fever, and general exhaustion from having borne too many children in rapid succession, death must have taken many of the women listed in our series at an early age.

163 The figures on children show that 1060
128 fathers, through the agency of 1375 wives, produced 5466 offspring who lived long enough for our subjects to remember them. This yields an average of 5.2 children per family, of whom 3399, or 62 per cent, were boys. Thus the average Gheg householder had 3.2 boys to help him work his farm. He had only 2.0 daughters to sell in marriage. This birth rate is so high that a considerable population